



Into the Fire...

Ezine
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The Value of Scrutiny within the Left-hand Path

Volume 1, Issue 1

Into the Fire is a writing collaboration project published monthly by the members of [The Circle of Descent](#). Each month, one topic will be put into the fire and forged by some of the finest minds the contemporary Left-hand Path has to offer.

Featuring:

- Scrutiny
- Wheel of Power
- Internal Alchemy
- The Wet Stone
- What is the Value of Scrutiny within the Left-hand-path?
- A Semantically Rhetorical Expose` Gleaning Scrutiny

Contributors to this Issue:

User X	2
Sin Jones	8
Dan Dread	14
Female Satan	17
Timishardcore	18
Beast Xeno	19
Canis Machina	21

Scrutiny

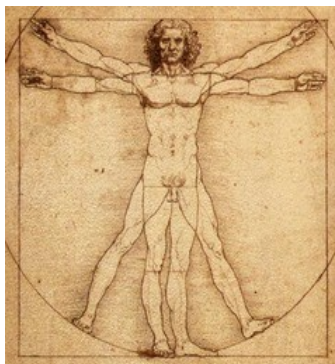
By UserX

So much wordless essence/meaning can be expressed in, and insight extracted from, such a short poem. Don't you think?

Critical examination - scrutiny - leads to Gnosis.

There is a philosophical dichotomy of a "Right Hand Path," and a "Left Hand Path." If we can entertain that dichotomy for a moment, we can say that the Right Hand Path involves a Quest to come to Know or understand the 'First Cause' of creation: God. And so, the Left Hand Path is the polar op-

posite, where it involves a Quest to come to Know or understand that which Creation has manifested. Not just any Manifestation, but Creation's - evolution's - crown jewel: Man.



Man is the pinnacle, the end result, of four billions years of continuous evolution. Man; if there be any other symbol more apt; represents the epitome of Nature; of Life.

For, it is Nature herself, which made him; which spent all that time weaving him into existence. To understand him, is to understand the essence, the quiddity, the nature, the Tao, which underlies Nature. In the same way as an archeologist can gradually come to an understanding of an ancient people: who they were, what they were like, what they thought and felt, why they made their cities, and so on; by studying the artifacts they have left behind. And so, we ourselves are the artifacts which Nature and Time have left behind.

The Left Hand Path is the path where we study the artifacts left behind by Nature,

so that we may in time come to an understanding of our Self and World. But such understanding – such realization – of the nature of self and world can only come from Scrutiny: from honest critical examination and observation of our own self and of the world we exist in and are an indivisible part and aspect of. Sans the sugar coated narrations and interpretations. If during the course of our human evolution our ancestors raped, murdered, and plundered, then say we did so honestly. Admit it, accept it. Then scrutinize why we did so, what drove us to do so, and how we may have benefitted from doing so.

If the most cutthroat creatures in Nature are the ones that survive and thrive to seed and sire the next generation of their kind, then admit it, and accept it as a factual Way of Nature: as how Nature works her aeonic craft. If such a method of honest scrutiny of Self and World is kept up, one will come to the realization that Nature is a Satan – The Adversary – of her own creations. A mother who gives birth with one hand, yet with the other, causes her own children strife and struggle.

But why should Nature have a darkly shadow side to her? Because her game is aeonic: to continue to exist and evolve herself across spans of aeons, at all cost. And to do that, the parts and pieces that make up Nature must be Proven and tested. Must be put through the Gauntlet. Like new recruits put through the gauntlet of boot camp. Such strife and struggle forges armies. Like fire forges steel.

The Tao of Nature

When we scrutinize – closely examine –

Mother Nature carefully, we first come to realize that “Nature” is reific and does not actually exist as a thing in and of itself. Meaning that we cannot go outside and point at Nature with a finger. Nature is a reified noun.

What does exist are different things such as the sun, mountains, river, clouds, rain, ground, grass, plants, animals, ocean, and so on. These would be the “constituencies” of “Nature.” We can here scrutinize these constituencies to discover an insight. Upon close examination, we see that these different constituencies are not isolated things. They are interconnected. The sun is connected to plants. Some rivers are connected to mountains. Rain is both connected to clouds and plants. Plants are connected to animals. And so on. When we further apply scrutiny to these interconnections we are able to come to understand that these constituencies of Nature form a system, in which system each constituency is a needed symbiotic part of a whole.

Thus, from such critical examination, we learn that Nature consists of smaller parts. And so now, for Nature to have continuously existed for circa four Billion years or more, such parts must be able to replicate themselves and thrive. In other words, we can say that Nature’s Life & longevity are dependent on such parts’ capacity for replication, or reproduction, or sex. And here, if we scrutinize our own selves, we see this principle reflected in us. For, our own individual life & longevity are likewise dependent on the ability for our cells – our smaller parts – to replicate and reproduce themselves. I have always believed that reality is fundamentally fractal.

The Tao of Life

Nature's billion year longevity depends on the ability for her parts – life forms – to replicate themselves. So now we scrutinize any life form honestly and objectively and we see two principles: (1) What organisms Adapt will Survive; & (2) What organisms become Adept will Thrive.

The question to refine our scrutiny of Life then becomes: What is Life adapting to or becoming adepts of? The answer is the environment. Because the environment is dynamic and changes. Here, the word environment does not just mean the ground and mountains and terrain a creature lives within, it also means the other organisms around it. If an organism's environment is dynamic and changes, and if a creature must learn to adapt to such changes or become adept of their new environment, then we now come to discover that there is "something" – a phenomenon – which these organisms are struggling with to adapt and become adepts of.

Those organisms which do not adapt die off and go extinct. In Life, there is no right way or wrong way to adapt and become adept. Some organisms may use strength and brute force to become fit to survive. Ants use collective force and organization to become adepts of their environment and thrive. Parasites use something different altogether to survive and thrive. And those that do survive and thrive are rewarded by Nature to seed the next generation with their genes.

The phenomenon these organisms are struggling against in order to survive and thrive

can be observed in college. It cannot be seen directly, but you can see its effects and affects. Students who do not adapt to the way of college are gone. Those that do adapt, may survive college life, but to survive does not always mean such students have achieved anything remarkable. Those students who become adepts of college are the one who thrive in this environment, and are the ones to rise to the top, above the rest. Each student who survives and thrives in colleges till the end is then rewarded with degrees and high paying careers. Those that don't fail. So what exactly are driving these students to strive to develop themselves where they struggle to pass classes and get good grades? What are they struggling against?

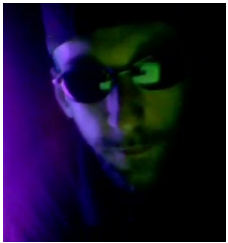
Know Thyself:

*Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is Man.
Placed on this isthmus of a middle state,
A being darkly wise and rudely great:
With too much knowledge for the Sceptic side,
With too much weakness for the Stoic's pride,
He hangs between; in doubt to act or rest,
In doubt to deem himself a God or Beast,
In doubt his mind or body to prefer;
Born but to die, and reasoning but to err;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such
Whether he thinks too little or too much:
Chaos of thought and passion, all confused;
Still by himself abused, or disabused;
Created half to rise and half to fall;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled:
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world!*

By Alexander Pope.

"When we further apply scrutiny to these interconnections we are able to come to understand that these constituencies of Nature form a system, in which system each constituency is a needed symbiotic part of a whole."

They are struggling against an “Adversarial Current,” built into the “college system.” This “current” is what causes the student to struggle, but in that struggling, the student evolves to become more than what he or she was. Without that Adversarial Current pushing them, there would be no evolution. And in Nature it is this same Adversarial Current that all life struggles against, which is the driving force behind evolution. Four billion years of evolution – four billions years of struggling against this Adversarial Current – has produced you and me. And so, Jason King once wrote:



“I would invite the reader to engage in an honest appraisal of the common world of phenomena, and what seems to me to be an unavoidable conclusion regarding the formative energies therein. The world as we find it

is undeniably adversarial. Or, in other words, undeniably Satanic. This follows from nothing more than informed observation - i.e. simply paying attention to the way in which the world operates, from the highest to the lowest and all in-between. Conflict generates superlative states of being, and everything that survives has been tested by adversity.” Postmodern Satanism, JK

The Tao of Man

Just by simply scrutinizing Nature, we can come to a realization which would make the religionist feel very uncomfortable about Life/Nature. That the God of Nature – Na-

ture’s God – is The Adversary. But this realization is scrutiny or critical examination applied outwards to the objective World we exist in. The same degree of insights can be produced when we direct this same scrutiny inward to examine the Self. As the saying goes: “Man, Know Thyself.” And there is no realistic way to come to know oneself other than by an honest close examination of ourselves. We must put ourselves into the fire of scrutiny.

But there is a barrier which divided the objective Self from the belief of whom and what we are. This barrier is our own private perception of Self. It is not so much a barrier; but rather; a defensive mechanism. The old adage “We see what we want to see” applies here. Reality is 10% objective and 90% subjective. Meaning that what we apprehend of the world and self in our minds is only 10% of the time what they really are objectively. The other 90% are mental chattering, extra layers we add on top of things.

The extra layer of words and their semantic fields, ideations, conceptualizations, interpretations, assumptions, speculations, conjecture, ideology, doctrine, belief, philosophy, morality, etc., and so on. Like an onion, such extra layers must be peeled back, if one desires to get down to the basic “core.” In other words, if we ever earnestly desire to come to an honest apprehension of the Self – of Man, of Knowing Our Self – then we each must labor to denude our own apprehension of the Self of all those extra layers.

For, the simple fact is we have; by our

very nature as language speaking creatures; conditioned ourselves into filtering our reality and sense of self thru language: we think in language. With words, and the ideas and definition of words. For, we think, reason, and rationalize what we see of the world and self with such words and their ideations and meanings. Our paradigm (the word means "pattern" in ancient Greek) we each may have, in other words, is made up of not patterns of objectivity, but are composed of patterns of our own words and mental interpretations. And so, because of this, the result is that more often than naught, we become prey to our very own illusory abstractions: apparitions of our own mind.

Here is a great example we may all be able to realistically relate to concerning this matter. When we were children playing with friends and neighbors, we saw such friends and neighbors we played with in a "pure" way. The word "pure" here meaning without extra additives. But when we grow up, we no longer see these same people around us in such a clear way. We now see them as White people, Niggers, Liberals, Christians, Jews, Homosexuals, Atheists, Theists, Hicks, Criminals, Yuppies, and so on and so forth. The question then is: Just how much of a person we apprehend in our adult years are "extra additives" of words, semantic, ideation, conceptualizations, doctrinal or ideological or philosophical interpretations? In other words, how much of what we see and know of a person is objective, and how much of it are subjective

layerings of abstractions.

The point here is: if we have a hard time actually perceiving another individual in a clear and objective manner, how much more unclear are our own conceptions of our Self: of who and what we are? How much of who and what we believe ourselves to be is subjective layerings, are thought and word patterns? How do you "Know Thyself" if this Self is buried beneath all of these illusory abstractions? How much of what we know about ourselves are independent of our own thoughts and words? What do I mean by that?

I mean in English we call the major satellite orbiting our planet the "moon," and this same moon is called by many other words in other languages. But the moon is still what it is objectively even if we stop calling it anything: even if we stop thinking about it. So then, how much of our Self is actually there when we remove or dissolve all the words, all our thoughts, all our beliefs, etc.?

This reminds me of an obscure historical story I came across during my research of the OTO and its roots. I first learned about the Ordo Templi Orientis from reading the Satanic Bible. Not being familiar with it, I spent some time researching it and so on. Of course, the OTO has its roots in something called Freemasonry. And so my studies of the OTO caused me to research Freemasonry and its history so I can gain a better, more fuller, understanding of what the OTO was and is.

Anyways, there are two different species of “Freemasonry,” the first is what they call “Regular,” and the second is what they refer to as “Irregular.” The difference is analogously similar to Nation-States. A “Regular” State is like Canada or China. An “Irregular” State would be like Taiwan, because Taiwan does not meet the criteria of what a “State” is, and so the “regular” States do not recognize Taiwan as a State.

Regular Freemasonry has something called the “Landmarks,” which marks out the psychological territory of what Freemasonry is. Any Grand Lodge jurisdiction which does not meet all of these Landmarks is considered and condemned to be Irregular. The first Landmark is: The belief in a supreme being.

It happened that in the past a Grand Lodge jurisdiction in France removed the landmark of a belief in a supreme being. This group would be referred to as “Grand Orient Masonry,” after what they call their grand lodges: “Grand Orients.” Grand Orient Masonry removed this landmark and began letting Atheists become Freemasons. This caused a rupture in the world of Freemasonry, and Grand Orient Masonry was disowned and rejected by the regular jurisdictions of the world, even though the only thing Grand Orient Masonry changed was one mere landmark.

To their defense, the Grand Orients stated that they removed the landmark of a belief in a supreme being not because they were “Atheists” but because they had a dif-

ferent interpretation for what a deity was. They stated that their conceptualization of God is entirely based on how Albert Pike himself interpreted God. Albert Pike, by the way, is a demigod in Regular Freemasonry. He restructured Freemasonry, invigorated it, and saved it from dying out after the “Morgan Affair.” He’s the guy who created the “33 degrees.”

Albert Pike interprets God in a pseudo-pantheistic way, hinted at by the Masonic letter G, often seen in between their Square and Compass. The letter G stands for two things simultaneously: God and Geometry. Esoterically meaning that God and the physical Geometry of the Universe is the same thing. In other words, God is the physical universe and the mind of Man, is the mind of God.

As you can see, the lines between theism and atheism are blurred in that historical story. Take note that the universe itself objectively does not change regardless of how either side interprets what they see. The regular Freemasons conceptualize God as a being of intelligence or as the creator. Whereas the Irregular Grand Orients interpret God as the physical universe and the laws of Nature.

And so, how much of this theism-atheism dichotomy is really there; objectively; if we try to transcend the words, ideations, thoughts, interpretations, conceptualizations, philosophications, etc. Does the divide between theism-atheism exist

independent our words, of our beliefs, our paradigm, our thoughts? What is left of this dichotomy when we scrutinize it; when we critically examine it? And how much of it is just an abstract mental interpretation of the objective world of phenomena and experience? How much of that dichotomy is an illusion. And more importantly, how much of that illusion defines who and what we are?

And so again, the question is: If we are to Know Ourselves, how do we come to know this Self, if it is buried beneath layers and layers of abstractions of word, idea, belief, and thought? How much of our Self remains, when those layers have been peeled back by Self-Scrutiny; Self-Examination? What is Man and his Tao when all those layers have been removed? What are we when we have learned to see Man with clarity?

Although self-scrutiny may lead us to understanding our Self as it is, this requires of us that we each become our own Satan: our own adversary. Just as scrutinizing the world/nature in an honest manner can get us to understand what it is and how it works objectively. So can we come to a clear and objective understanding of Man by scrutinizing our Self with honesty?

The Left Hand Path

The Left Hand Path, is the path less traveled. Seven billion humans on Earth and a majority of them walk the Right Hand Path. This is that path which leads to the understanding of God, and thus of his holy books, his laws, his myths, and so on. In that

path, Man is insignificant, a mere pawn of God's plan. In that path, the mission of Man is to come to Know God, so that he may learn to know the cause of creation.

The Left Hand Path is the path which leads to the Knowing of Man as he really is. In this path Man is the Key to the Mystery of existence. The Key to the mystery of experience and why experience even exists. The mission of this path is for each of us to strive to Know Ourselves as we are sans abstractions.

To walk the Right Hand Path, all you need are books, bibles, and priests. On the Left Hand Path, all that is needed is the ability to scrutinize every detail of the self and world. To really critically examine everything closely. To be a Satan – an adversary – to the world and our own selves. To challenge everything we know of our world and our self. Every idea, every thought, every word which makes up the patterning of our personal paradigm. To place what we know of the world and self into the fire. Allowing the extra layers of abstract mind stuff to burn away gradually. Much like how the impurities of metallic ore are slowly burned away in the furnace. Such that, in the hands of a skilled word smith, what was once impure and contaminated ore, is forged into a blade: Tempered by the Fire.

The Wheel of Power

By Sin Jones

Powering Principal

Living, thinking and my way of going about it, is a conscious reflection of having experienced outcomes that were a direct result of my own cognitive biases gone unchecked. I have strengths, weaknesses and tend to be a realist when it comes to dealing with my own make-up. I don't negate the comforts of Heuristic reasoning, often the involuntary 'gut reaction' to stimuli is favored, to harsh Scrutiny. The value of critical examination only holds value insofar as the ability you have to employ it in crucial moments. Otherwise, you fall subject to *Affect Heuristic*.

Having an overt and active mind can also border into being overly analytical and indecisive. You can become less intuitive and more reliant on facticity to a point where you're ignoring the more advantageous, you're choosing from choices already made for you, and are less inclined to forge your own. In essence, submergence below the

arbitrary will of any sort of individual.

Influences from the outside can force a person to act in direct opposition to one's own inclinations. Whether you actually own them, is at the root of our motivations. Human beings are naturally inclined to gain power. On one hand you have a need for it, the more power you attain over your own life, the happier and better off you are. On the other, when you lose personal power, give it to another, rationalize it away or even justify having lost it, you are masking personal misery: A *Left-handed vs. Right-handed power principal*. Power is a force, it can drive you to fulfill your wants and desires and equally it can drive you to utter annihilation.

Using the Left-hand Path as a methodology isn't an attempt at eradicating what I am, nor is reducing it to a self-help regime quite accurate or effectual in getting to the crux of the matter. Self-empowerment isn't just attaining knowledge and testing your own boundaries, it's also nurturing your own proclivities to personal fulfillment. At some point, you begin to ques-



tion your own motives. Whether by happenstance or walking right into a perspective wall, something is in your way and you don't want your power to lose momentum.

To scrutinize the Left-hand-path itself is a way to find personalized meaning versus adherence to a pre-established set of ideas. The Blavatsky-theory merely explains the word populated, it's not absolute nor is it relevant to praxis. The essence of the LHP riddle is a Koan to contemplate. Articulations of it are diversified in actual practice and do not sublimate to peer approval. Each will manifest as his own Chakavartin and through his *Will* turns the wheel or else be crushed under its weight. Some find the value of peer scrutiny essential to their world view; however our experiences grade vantage point, how could another stand at my position at the helm? Sharing interests and opinions is mining data, at best. You can pick at bits, free them from their form but the essence is a raw material to be forged into the Chakravarta. At its worst, a succubus coiled, draining the energy and distracting you away from the work at hand.

There can be no peer-review of my life's experiences, knowledge attainment or my mode of being in the world. Scrutiny as a process of personal evaluation is grinding a blade against the wheel. The sharper your tool, the deeper it cuts. Swinging it isn't just a process of carving out your ideal self; it's a battle-axe in war when it's you against the mechanism. To diminish it to sheer utility, will leave you weighed, measured and found wanting. Trans-valuation strives to disempower the strong and empower the meek. The under-achiever is glorified with Valor and the Warrior demonized and outcast. Great men have both astute awareness of their surroundings and honed instincts to move about the machine as *Devil*.

Peers as Critical Friends

There's a distinction to be made between an associate and *Critical Friends*. The role itself cannot be filled by loosely affiliated individuals; even if you think their opinions and insights hold significance. First, the role implies Trust. Trusting a person, absent of a long-term interpersonal bond, to have your best interests in mind is not only foolish but gives them power over you. Secondly, the per-

son must share your key aims. You can certainly share similar interests with another person but key aims? Not likely. Even people that share their lives often have different life goals and aspirations. If you're precarious in choosing them, they are less likely to meet the criteria.

Generally speaking, the *Critical Friend* is described as thus:

A trusted person that asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, as well as offers critiques of a person's thoughts and actions.

Expanded for context:

The Pro's and perceived benefits:

What a Critical Friend has to offer

- A fresh perspective
- Feedback about the information/deed vs. the person
- An understanding of the situation
- A willingness to listen
- Being tuned-in
- Balancing the point of support/challenge

- Reality Check
- A *Critical Friend* is the mid-point between a hostile and an unquestioning follower
- A *Critical Friend* is someone that shares the same aim
- Asks critical and constructive questions
- Brings new information/Fresh Perspective
- Invests time to develop proper understanding
- Invests time and resources to develop trust and respect between both parties

Value

- Drives improvement
- Invested in seeing the person improve
- Aids in developing questioning of strategies to develop skills
- Brings something new to personal debate/conflict resolution
- New Data
- Fresh Perspective
- Evidence to be examined

The Con's:

- De-Valuation
- Forming Consensus
- Negative Influence

Even the motivating factors should be scrutinized; a way to employ checks & balances.

- Does the Scrutiny bring an effective challenge?
- How impacting is the Scrutiny?
- How much of a role does Scrutiny play in evaluation of strategy/skill-development?
- How much of a value does the 'Critical Friend' hold?
- Has his/her Scrutiny been effective in the past?
- Has it been offered critically (challenging and essential) and does the Scrutiny meet both demands?

In Ego fulfillment, there's rarely a person that is genuinely or sincerely interested in seeing you succeed. A LHP mindset wielded by a stranger seeks to challenge you endlessly, with great hostility and often with distilled apathy.

Examination Value

I regard personal examination as a heterogeneous. The sum of its parts and its effectiveness is only as good as the conductor. Personal scrutiny precipitates clear and concise conditions that satisfy personal ends: *The needs of the One, in relation to the needs of the few.*

If an idea is presented for my examination, there may be the initial short-cut reaction to it (Affect Heuristic) then when given enough time to digest it, it's scrutinized for a closer examination. This accounts for my snap-judgments on something that sounds too absurd to be true but after closer examination I actually find some truth in it. Judging and acting are often compulsory. Personal examination involves revisiting ideas you've previously investigated, seeing it from different angles, offering it a number of considerations as well as exploring many possibilities. In the moment however, you rely on amassed reasoning to that point. All of which can be made useless in service to emotional impulses. Those little fuckers, can take even the most rational and reasonable person down to their knees: The Ouroboros of epistemology.

Word definition exercises can be reduced to Semantics games; I find concept analysis an alternative that reaps the more advantageous. Words are transparent; I'm more interested in the actor behind them. In my observation, our mental abilities fall subject to interpretive tasks (i.e. imagination and empathy) and get to the root of personal interpretation of data. Take for example the scrutiny of art. A person may choose to analyze the object's properties, the Artist or the Artist's intentions. Asking probing questions isn't enough, the answers are often inadequate to fully understand and thereby achieve knowledge. Many would argue that for the piece to stand-alone and qualify as art; it falls subject to *The Intention Fallacy*. Discussions about art often fall into the bottomless pit of qualifying the *definition*. Adding insult to injury, the subject can be over-complicated by introducing other concepts such as applying *Eye of the Beholder*, just another form of subjective interpretation, and intentionalism to distract from the staging of motivations. Why is it important to have others agree with our judgments about Art?

Our ability to scrutinize has rather complex

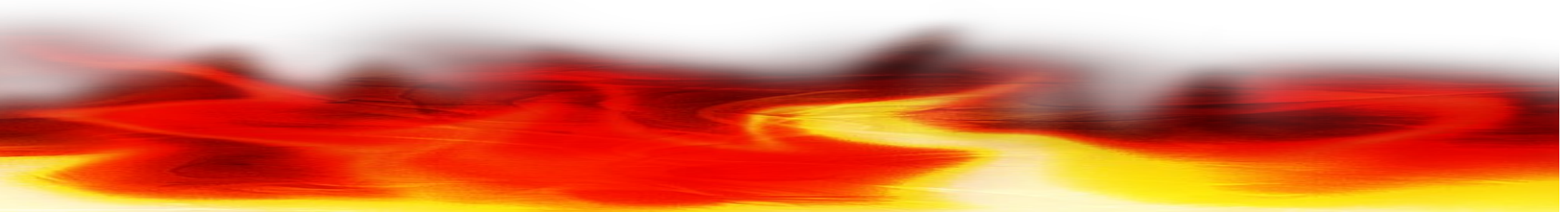
dimensions. Thoughts are vehicles and affect cognition to form other thoughts. Philosophers attempt to resolve this conflict by offering hearty treatise on proper reasoning. Kant for example, offers his own criticism on our ability to carry it out properly in *Critique of the Power of Judgment* by outlining the distinctions between aesthetic and cognitive judgments. If you pick up the work, give it a read and decide his ideas are agreeable, this may qualify as an aesthetic judgment. Throughout his works he constantly and consistently asks the question: *Why do we require others share our judgment?* Philosophy is examination of the psyche, which is why many Philosophers qualify as Psychologists. Philosophy does not provide us with answers; it's merely a method for seeking them ourselves. The essence seeks a form much like an interpretive dance of the mind. Lovers of the dance do not seek its end but rather continue seeking music to dance to.

Conclusion

With my disposition in mind, I scrutinize my motives to prevent falling subject to self-deception, self-defeat and becoming my own

influencing agent. New information can present itself that forces me to re-examine thoughts I retain to include the mitigating factors that led me to hold them in the first place. Not to say I don't stand by many of my ideas with conviction, there have been far too many instances where my beliefs were forged in a self-knowledge sense and served me well. I'm far too head-strong to be coerced into taking up the beliefs of others simply because they are popular, common or serve the coercer's purpose; e.g. should I accept a gallery owner's definition of Art because his motivations are to benefit from monetary gains? Only if my own motives are to lend the force of his power my momentum.

At best, participation in group scrutiny as LHP is a 360 surveillance of ideas, a comparative interpretation of data. The LHP is a vibe that can be dampened by Peer Pressure. This sort of acceptance, popularity and vying for respect is the Right-hand shaking the Left and if your hands are full who is really guiding the wheel?





Internal Alchemy

By Dan Dread

Change is hard, uncomfortable, and disconcerting, when it comes to the self. It is easy to attack and dissect ideas that are not your own, that you do not hold dear and that do not add to the world 'making sense' so to speak, for they are not within our sovereign boundaries. We have no stake what is outside of those borders in any tangible sense, as they have been relegated to the realm of 'other', in the sense we humans tend to do ideas that are not our own. This is the very same psychological construct that allows us to feel no remorse when hearing about a 'terrorist' getting killed yet maybe feel a twinge for the 'honorable soldier protecting our freedom'.

This second type of scrutiny, or external scrutiny, is easy. We all do it on some level or another every day. I am not talking about the sometimes fiery nature of mano a mano discourse (regardless of medium) but just going about your daily life and negotiating the world. Do you cross at the light or jaywalk? Do you eat a sandwich for lunch or a salad because you are concerned about your chole-

sterol or some shit like that? Mundane day to day examples, yet ever action we take involves taking in information from the world, scrutinizing it on some level and proceeding to do something. Natural, day to day existence, a finger of Jason King's 'master'

Yet, even as we all go about our day to day using this natural tool to decipher the universe, very few of us think to turn it inward, or if they do take only baby steps in that direction. In the sense a fat girl might buy a workout machine of some sort (that will never be used) to feel better about her weight. In this sense, people 'find themselves', get religion, associate themselves with an identity so they can point to it and say, 'see, this is what I'm doing to grow myself'. Yet with each incarnation of religion, philosophy, or group identity people tend to carry their same 'idea set' and how they interpret it with them, and if they can't find a way for the tail to wag the dog they will generally move to the next thing. I like to call these sorts 'seekers'.

I am no different. I, like everyone, protect my ideas and boundaries, and find changes that rock my philosophical foundations to be difficult, once they make it through my automated defense system. Even being aware of the process I cannot simply 'switch it off' any more than anyone else can, because my brain is a human brain just like everyone else's is, which functions along certain parameters and allows me an experience of the universe not dissimilar from everyone else's. 'The path' so to speak never gets easy, for if it becomes easy you are only dealing in external alchemy and aren't getting any real work done.

I have noticed in myself how the process works. Sometimes I catch it mid-stream, sometimes I don't. When something I am not 'prepared' for crosses into my world that I have no easy answer for, my instinctual reaction is 'kill it with fire'. While I find this to be a good policy as it keeps the bullshit at bay, sometimes it also closes the door to actual progress. Often, after the process of cognitive dissonance has taken its course and ideas have had a chance to settle, after the emotional and psychological kneejerk that ranged

it into my conscious awareness from somewhere in the back forty of my unconscious mind subsides, the ingredients begin to bond. But only because I ALLOW it. At this point in the psycho-ride that is the assimilation of uncomfortable data, the easy thing is still to ignore it or shun it, and keep the older, more comfortable idea set unaltered. Sometimes these changes happen anyway, but far less often. Usually once I am aware of an instance of this, I will engineer some action to test and overcome myself.

A small example for me, using a shared context, is how I view and handle 'theists'. I used to be a vehement atheist that would not give the time of day to theists. Everything they said was 'stupid' based on my own preconception of them, and everything I was, they weren't. Any common ground was unacceptable to me. I'm not sure exactly when or how but this fact came into my awareness, so I started seeking out religious people online and in real life, trying to put myself in their headspace. Online I posed as 'theistic Satanists', Christians, Muslims, trying to just blend in. In the real I sat down for long discussions with Mormons, Jehovah's witnesses, and whoever else wanted to offer me

that perspective. Years I had spent keeping these people at bay, worried I would somehow become infected by them in some hidden part of my mind, yet as I tried to put myself into their positions I found the transition, psychologically, to be uncomfortable at first, yet surprisingly easy to slip into.

That is when I started to notice it was all psychology. Online, as I entered into debate with people that hold positions closer to my actual position under the guise of a theist, I started noticing holes in my own shit, and started nodding and agreeing with some of the theistic positions. No, not the precept of imaginary friends in the sky, but other things. It's amazing how when someone whom you have dubbed as 'other' speaks, how easy it is to disregard the package wholesale.

I also notice the trend working in reverse. Things I would say that would ordinarily be agreed with or garner me a 'hell ya' were being disregarded without being given due time, because I, so they believed, held an irreconcilable belief that somehow spoiled the batch. Like me, I don't think it was anything they were con-

sciously doing, just the process in action. I had made myself 'other' to them, and was being handled accordingly.

All in all I think it's a matter of identity. People grip tightly to it, both consciously and unconsciously, for fear of losing themselves. The thing is, the self can never be static, and it seems pointless to me to consciously work to make it that way. It's like we are all huddled in our sleeping bags gripping tightly the flap so nothing might get in, without ever realizing the thing has already been sewn shut from the outside, and you are going to need a box cutter to get out.



The Wet Stone

by Female Satan

There is a refrain you will hear from Satanists and it comes in many forms and has different terms used for it. 'The Fire', steel sharpening steel, putting up your ideas for peer review, etc. It's bullshit, all you do is provide yet another opinion in a sea of opinions. All I do is provide yet another opinion in a sea of opinions.

It's me who sits there with a wet stone slowly sharpening that blade so I can engage in another rhetorical exchange. It's me who figures out where my weaknesses are and turns them into strengths. It's me who applies the lessons, burns down my own paradigm over and over again to see what doesn't burn.

You don't do those things for me. You provide rhetoric. You provide a sparring partner. Someone that I can square off with to see just where my mental strengths and weaknesses are. You are not the one changing my mind or scrutinizing my ideas.

Rhetoric is the art of persuasive speaking or writing. It is not and never has been scrutiny. It's a way to win a discussion, it's a way to influence others ideas, manipulate the masses to agree with your ideas. Rhetoric is useful and all people you encounter in online forums use

it to some degree with differing level of success.

Scrutiny is not the same thing. Scrutiny is critical observation or examination. When I present something and get hit with others rhetoric I have a choice to make. I can scrutinize my ideas or reject the rhetoric of others. I can hold onto something that hasn't held up to presenting it to others, or examine myself and the set of ideas in my head I am constantly walking around with.

Some thoughts I have are illusions and delusions I keep for one reason or another. They make me feel comfortable with things, they make me feel safe, I never really questioned the why and whatfors of that concept, whatever.

Other thoughts I have are based on my own personal experience. I lived through something and learned from it, an old idea I had about something was replaced with a concrete, this is how it is in reality concept.

The first kind can potentially be blasted away by someone else's rhetoric. Others will need more, they will need to actually get my hands dirty to get rid of that idea.

It is me doing the critical examination, not others. Others may be challenging me but it's me who sits down and evaluates if my ideas are shit or not afterwards. It's me who takes the rhetoric I encounter and digests it, puts it against my own ideas to see what is left.

What is the Value of Scrutiny within the Left-hand Path? By TimisHardcore

scru·ti·ny
'skroōtn-ē/
noun

noun: **scrutiny**; plural noun: **scrutinies**
critical observation or examination

*In this essay I will be using words, IE: Left or Right, only to make it easier to understand where I am coming from and do not necessarily agree with the dualism they represent.

For me this is a very interesting question if only for the reason that I do not claim to specifically hold a Left hand path ideology or for that matter a Right hand path one. I see both terminologies as man's way of drawing a line in the sand and saying “ Pick a side” and the problem with that way of thinking is it produces a dogmatic ideology in most in which the person clings to and will not venture across the line for any reason. I personally prefer the word TAO or “PATH” as a way of describing my way of thinking, no left or right is needed in my opinion. I have found that as I travel my path I cross through many different viewpoints, both left and right as it were, and can agree with much of what I see along the way. Now that the disclaimer is out of the way let us get on with the question at hand. What value do I place on scrutiny within my path, how

do I apply that scrutiny to my worldview and my life? I have said before that I view the mind as a sort of computer and have rejected the idea that “We are not our own ideas” for as a computer we load our programs and allow them to run subconsciously with no or little help. I drive a truck for a living and I do not need to look at the diagram of the gear pattern to shift or to be looking at the stick every time I need to shift in order to do it properly, my mind is on automatic when it comes to those things for they are programmed into me by repetition. The only way to get rid of such programming (or viruses in some cases) is to delete the old one and load another in its place and that is where scrutiny has its value to me.

Me and my wife take the time every year and do some Spring cleaning as it is called. We go through stuff that we have accumulated over the past year/years and decide if it is worth keeping or throwing out, this includes clothes, books, toys and anything else that has lost its usefulness to us and is just taking up space in our home. I use this same idea to rid myself of useless programs of the mind. Some programs are harder to delete for they are embedded like a Trojan virus and others are an easy out and can be replaced with little or no effort. The Path is a hard one and for me it seems to be a mountain, steep and rocky, but do not take that as a complaint but more of a challenge, for my friends and family have said I like my life “Shaken not stirred.” Scrutiny has its value in deciding what to keep and what to discard along the way as to not hinder or weigh me

down on the climb. I use those “Sabbaticals” and rest stops along the way to energize and dump all the toxic waste that has accumulated in my system over the years. I have found that ideas that have carried me and have made me stronger and pushed me along my path to be no longer useful for the future climb and those must be discarded along the way or they will weigh me down and slow the progress or even cause a slide down the mountain.

Scrutiny is a valuable weapon if not the most valuable weapon in a person's arsenal for it can be fatal to hold onto ideas and even people in our lives that chain us down.



A Semantically Rhetorical Exposé Gleaning Scrutiny, By T.C. Downey

What is the value of scrutiny in the left-hand path? To understand the value of something, we must first properly understand; what it is and how exactly it works. There is perhaps an air of irony, in that we must now apply scrutiny. Defined by Wikipedia as originally meaning, "those who search through piles of rubbish in the hope of finding something of", I am assuming value. What could be the possible value of scrutiny, to the left-hand path?

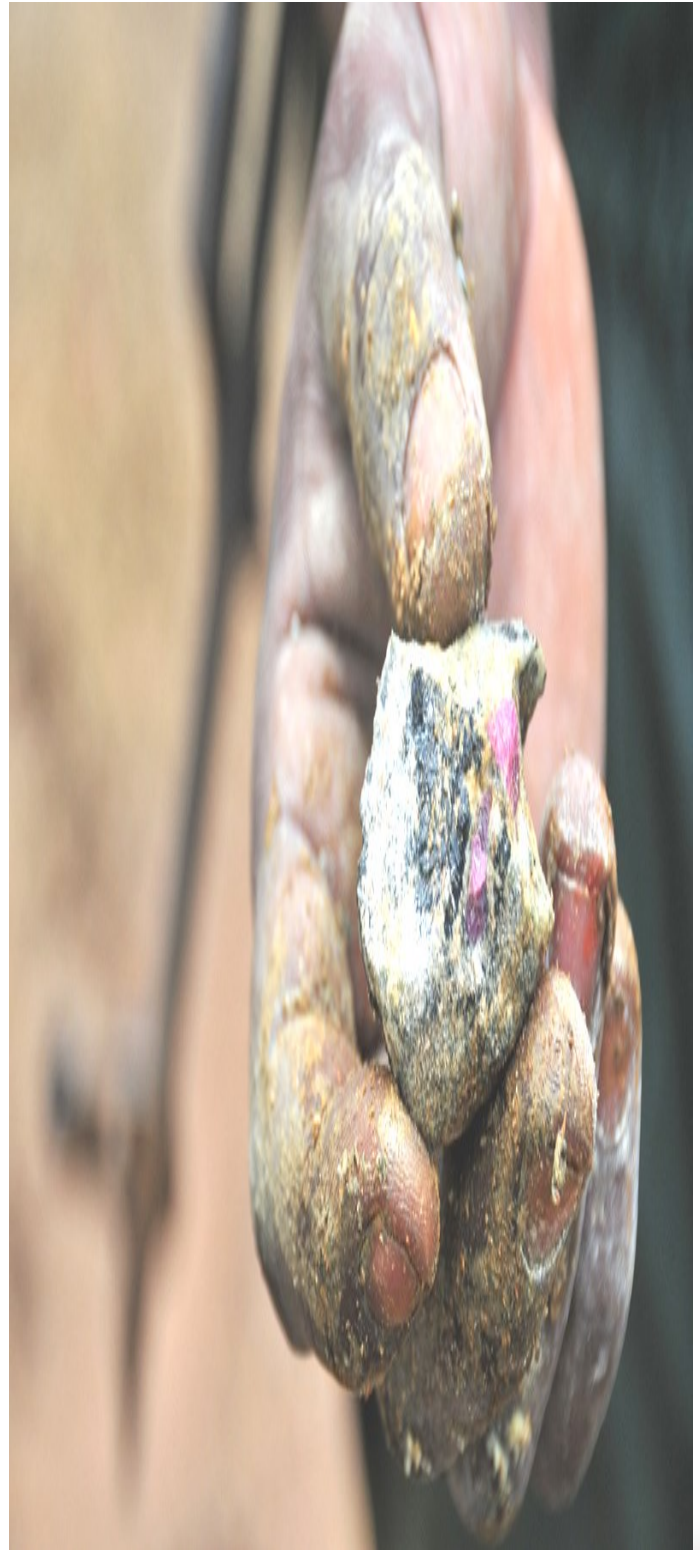
What is scrutiny? The most popular understanding of this word is “close examination”. For me that does not capture the character of scrutiny. The Online Etymology Dictionary states in the early 15th century, the word scrutiny meant; “a vote to choose someone, to decide upon a question”. Its Latin root **skreu* means “to cut; a cutting tool”. The word seems to have originated, from people who dug through thrash hoping to find something valuable.

Maybe that is why, Wikipedia specifically examines scrutiny's early Roman Catholic associations. Described as being a method of purification, with an implication of a certain degree of difficulty; scrutiny was used ritually during the instruction of faith. It was also noted that scrutiny, is one of three methods of voting in the Pope, a contradistinction to ac-

clamation and accession; which are the other two methods mentioned.

The term contradistinction seems valuable, in correlation to scrutiny. As scrutiny effectively contrasts differentiating qualities, during a close examination. In fact, my definition of scrutiny is; a close examination of detail, differentiation, and result; executed with prejudicial intent to find value. Scrutiny in a sense, is feverishly sifting through the piles of rubbish, in hopes of finding rubies. Scrutiny brings accurate results by removing what is insubstantial. To practitioners of the Left-hand path, scrutiny is the father of piety and reason. Ritualized at the head of transgression and antinomianism. A sieve in the muddy banks of consciousness. A double-edged serrated blade peeling the rotting husk, to get at the juicy fruits of experience. It might be said that, you could pick out an adept practitioner; by the scarred and callousness of his thumb. So often he has found the meat of the matter has spoiled.

So what is the value of scrutiny in the left-hand path? Simply the results revealed by its use. Finding a ruby buried in the rubbish. Realizing, that the ruby was not all you have walked away with. Your hands are now course and conditioned, and you are not afraid to get them dirty. Your arms and shoulders are thick and strong. Your eyes are sharp and trained. There is a better sense of where the next ruby may lie.



When Failure is not Enough...

By Canis Machina

So here you are. You have put all your intellect into a poignant piece of masterful literary prowess. You skipped on the cliché, avoided meaningless platitudes, yet still you can't quite make the impact you desired. Please, pay no mind to the muddled laughter that you are hearing, because it almost certainly has nothing to do with the verbal abortion you just tried to pass off as a coherent line of thinking. When the harsh criticisms start to trickle in, like the still drunk twenty something's at last call at a dive bar, you realize you should have expected this. This is the sinister path and there is little tolerance for meaningless tripe.

The flaws will be magnified. The inconsistencies and fallacies will be placed in the crosshairs. Every deficiency will be exposed for all to mock. *Everything* is fair game once you share your thoughts. If it happens to be several shades of retarded it will most certainly form the reader's opinion on what you have to offer. Being judgmental, cynical, and outright mean is the MO of the audience you're playing for, and they have no problem shooting the violinist when he hit a sour

note. Best-be grateful. This type of scrutiny and unabated thrashing can only help you learn how insufficient you really are. It thickens your skin, and ultimately leads to greater insight.

On the LHP no one is going to hold your hand and lead the way. No one is interested in clearing the battlefield of unexploded ordnances. They will sit back with a bag of popcorn, watch you blow off your limbs then say, "*you know, you probably shouldn't have walked there.*" But herein is the learning experience, the failure. It is in every respect a trial by fire and if you are worth your weight, you will make progress. It is necessary if you expect to make any endeavor worthwhile. Being codled teaches you nothing.

Piranhas will be waiting to eat your flesh. 1920's era gangsters will shoot you down and make off with your bootlegged liquor. You will be played as the mark and gifted by shady meth dealing carnies. You will have every misstep you make highlighted and held up as a shining example of all the ways you have failed at life. Welcome to the left hand path...

Resiliency may vary.

The Value of Scrutiny within the Left-hand Path

*Brought to by those that dare to tread the
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#Nothingtosee

I am Satan, the Devil and I am here to do the Devil's Work.
Many names are whispered, but I am *known* by my deeds. To pres-
ence Evil is not by the words I etch in stone but the pound of flesh I
offer in its name.

None shall escape my fire.

You shall all burn from within.

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